(c) whether any National Tourism Policy has been framed, if so, its Salient features; and

(d) what action Government are taking about tourism awareness?

THE MINSITER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIKANTA KUMAR JENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The first meeting of the newly constituted Board of Tourism Industry and Trade was held on 29.10.97.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Salient features of the draft National Tourism Policy formulated include creating awareness about Socio-economic benefits of tourism, diversification of tourism product, providing for peoples participation in the development and distribution of benefits of tourism, facilitating the development of a dynamic private sector in tourism industry, co-ordinating the efforts of different Government Departments and agencies, etc.

(d) The Government is involving Public Relations Agencies, Industry Associations and carrying out media campaigns to create awareness about tourism.

Facilities to Tourism Sector at Par with Industry

766. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inspite of declaring tourism as industry, the facilities and concessions provided to industry are not being given to the ingredients of tourist industry in many states; and

(b) the steps taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIKANTA KUMAR JENA): (a) Number of state Governments have already declared tourism as an industry providing necessary concessions and incentives which vary from State to State.

(b) The State Governments have been advised from time to time for extending necessary incentives/concessions.

Travel Circuits in Maharashtra

767. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified some travel circuits in Maharashtra for intensive development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Central funds have been earmarked for the purpose;

(d) if so, the detials thereof; and

(e) the role being palyed by State Government of Maharashtra in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIKANTA KUMAR JENA): (a) and (b) The travel circuit identified in Maharashtra for intensive development is Raigad Fort—Janjira Fort—Kuda Caves—Sirivardhan—Harihareshwar—Sindhudurg. Besides Ajente—Ellora in Aurangabad is identified as a Tourist destination for intensive development.

(c) to (e) The Department of Tourism do not earmark fund for assistance to different states. However financial assistance is given on the basis of specific proposals received from them as per guidelines and merits of each case. During the VIIIth Five Year Plan that Deptt. of Tourism has sanctioned Rs. 273.22 lakhs for 12 projects in the circuit.

Tourist Inflow in Country

768. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 0.4% of total tourists in world come to India;